

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /076 W

-----180006Z 077174 /13

R 151356Z MAR 77 ZDK CITING RUEHCS 1392SWM VOL TO ALL OTHERS

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3103

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1533

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, CU

SUBJ: CASTRO VISIT TO ETHIOPIA

REFS: A) STATE 057062, B) ADDIS ABABA 1506

1. MARCH 15 ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ARRIVAL OF CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO AFTERNOON, MARCH 14, ABOARD AEROFLOT AIRLINER. CASTRO GREETED ON ARRIVAL BY PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN ATNAFU, OTHER PMAC MEMBERS, OFFICERS OF ARMED FORCES, SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND "PROGRESSIVE" ETHIOPIANS. ONLY MEMBER OF CASTRO DELEGATION MENTIONED IN PRESS WAS COMRADE CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, MEMBER, POLITICAL BUREAU OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA. CASTRO GIVEN "HERO'S" WELCOMING CEREMONY AT AIRPORT, INCLUDING FULL MILITARY

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HONORS FOR "GREAT INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY".

2. UNUSUALLY LARGE SECURITY ESCORT ACCOMPANIED CASTRO, MENGISTU, AND ATNAFU ON DRIVE FROM AIRPORT TO NATIONAL PALACE (FORMERLY JUBILEE PALACE). GUN SALVOS FIRED IN PALACE GROUNDS IN HONOR OF "GREAT INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT."

3. SZRIES OF MEETINGS BETWEEN CASTRO AND HIGHEST LEVELS OF ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT REPORTEDLY BEGAN THIS MORNING, MARCH 15. RECEPTION FOR CASTRO HOSTED BY CHAIRMAN WILL BE HELD AT NATIONAL PALACE EVENING MARCH 15. AS INSTRUCTED, I WILL NOT ATTEND. IT NOW LIKELY CASTRO WILL DEPART MARCH 16.

4. COMMENT: RUMORED SOVIET EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA TO SERVE THEIR INTERESTS IN HORN APPEAR TO HAVE REACHED HIGHER LEVEL. CASTRO VISIT, WHILE PROVIDING POLITICAL SUPPORT TO MENGISTU REGIME, MAY ALSO HELP TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF EXTERNAL PRESSURE ON REGIME. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL HIGH LEVEL VISITS BY "SOCIALIST" DELEGATIONS RECENTLY, CASTRO FIRST HEAD OF STATE TO VISIT ETHIOPIA SINCE FEBRUARY 3 EXECUTIONS. END COMMENT.
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